Appl. No. 10/681,522
Amendment dated August 3, 2004
Reply to Office Action of May 4, 2004

IN THE CLAIMS

Please enter the following amendments to the claims.

Claims 1-8 (cancelled)

9. (currently amended) A method comprising:

forming an inter-layer dielectric and following metallization layer formed of a metal selected from the group consisting of copper, silver, and gold on a substrate, the metallization layer comprising at least one first interconnect;

forming an upper inter-layer dielectric and an upper metallization layer formed of a metal selected from the group consisting of copper, silver, and gold over the inter-layer dielectric and the metallization layer, the upper metallization layer comprising at least one upper interconnect having a metal plug to contact the first interconnect; and

providing at least one dummy via plug disposed underneath the at least one first interconnect and proximate to the metal plug to provide a reservoir for metal ions to reduce a build-up of electromigration–induced mechanical stress.

10. (cancelled)

11. (original) The method of claim 9 wherein the at least one dummy via plug is not in electrical contact with other interconnects within an integrated circuit.

12. (original) The method of claim 9 wherein the first and upper interconnects include a conductive material selected from the group consisting of copper, silver and gold.

13. (original) The method of claim 9 wherein the at least two dummy via plugs are provided underneath the at least one first interconnect and proximate to the metal plug.

Claims 14-16 (cancelled)